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Canada and Christendom

CANADA and CHRISTENDOM

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Contributors This Issue

The Rev. R.F.H. Hettlinger is Professor of Systematic Theology at Wycliffe College, Toronto.

The Rev. C. R. Feilding is Dean of Divinity at Trinity College, Toronto.

Miss Helen Hall and Mr. Bruce Mutch are members of the Montreal "Coop".

EDITORIAL

While this issue of Canada and Christendom scarcely can be said to coincide with what is generally known as the resumption of fall activities, nevertheless it will reach its readers at a time when they have begun to act upon an earlier formulation of a "winter program," the sort of routine which, to most of us at least, presents a dull and forbidding prospect. The seemingly endless list of committee meetings, luncheons, social evenings, yes, and even discussion groups--those exasperating sessions where a general paralysis of the will is anointed with the oil of rationalized frustration--seem so obviously unrelated to the pressing problems of Christendom that the very soul of the Christian cries out for release from the bonds of meaningless activity.

Why must this be so? In fact, how can it be so? It hasn't always been this way, surely. In earlier times the Church was able to sanctify the economic, political, and truly social activities of the community and bring them as an offering to God in an integrated wholeness of life replete with meaning. Surely we can say that this was at least the aim of the Church even if the realization often fell short of the ideal.

The sociologists would describe this accomplishment as the mere "norm" of a "primitive" social organization with the glibness of those who share the naive belief that human history is reducible to a description of a few simple forms. Actually, the unity of Christendom was a phenomenon in history wherein an entire civilization was united on the basis of a common attitude toward life among its members in spite of their ethnic, social, and economic diversity. We find something more than an analogy in the common life in the communities of those days and the unity of Christendom. That something more is what we lack in our communities to-day and in our aspiration toward "One World". Unfortunately for those who are optimistic about world peace for the future, the two are interdependent. A common point of view toward world peace involves a common attitude toward the problems of earning our daily bread and sharing our day-to-day joys and sorrows.

It's not enough to say that events are moving too fast,

that the Church is too ponderous an institution to adjust itself to the rapid changes of modern society. To say that would be to admit that the Church is just an institution. It's not enough to say that the Industrial Revolution has so transformed society and is so transforming it that no communities of men in fact exist. After all, the Industrial Revolution has been with us for over a century and a half and secular philosophers, politicians, and the organized workers have not been too slow at adjusting to it.

The Church can restore the Christian community to the lathe, the production line, the garage, and the slum, in order that the workers may have life, and that more abundantly. In fact, Christians are doing this and it is the intention of Canada and Christendom to bring to the attention of its readers instances where the dynamic of Christian Evangelism is bearing fruit among the truly lost of our society and where the sacraments are being brought to the production lines.

It is in the belief that Christians everywhere will rejoice in the news of these experiments that Canada and Christendom plans to publish these accounts. Many of them are just experiments; that is they are in a formative stage. Some of them are isolated instances. We hope that as knowledge of them spreads they will cease to exist in isolation but will expand into the full flower of a united Christendom.

Incidentally, with this issue, Canada and Christendom begins its second volume of publication. For the editors, too, this season presents the prospect of a "winter program" involving the routine of soliciting, reading, editing, and rejecting articles, supervising the process of printing, mailing, and, by no means least important, finding new readers. To us, the prospect is an exciting one, which we trust our readers will share in some measure. We can only commend this magazine to you on the basis of its assistance to you in the varied problems which you face. On that basis, your co-operation, contributions, and criticisms will be a welcome benefit.

CRAFTSMANSHIP AND WORSHIP

In Camrose, Alberta, there has recently been built what must be one of the most beautiful as well as one of the

least expensive small churches in Canada. Why? Because the Bishop asked for a church which should rise out of the design of the buildings in the community and yet look like a church. Here is no irrelevant Gothic in the middle of the prairie; but a church in which every use has been made of building materials, methods and designs already familiar to the neighbourhood. The people were able to build much of it themselves to the designs of an Edmonton architect who was bold enough to create a building at once immediately relevant to the ageless worship of God and to the contemporary life of a western town.

In the Church of St. John the Evangelist in Edmonton, you may see a cross and candlesticks, graceful and of beautiful proportions. They were made of wrought iron derived from an old bed-spring by a craftsman who is a member of the parish, after the design of the church's own architect. In St. James's Church, Vancouver, you may see the beautiful flower vases made by a local potter; their stern simplicity, their proportion and the colour of the clay are exactly right for that particular church. In St. Alban's, Peterborough, there is a plain but lovely altar built of the simplest modern building material, ply-wood. It is lovely not only because of the complete absence of that brown varnish which casts its hideous pall over so many church interiors, but because a painter has rubbed a little paint into its grain to bring out in both grain and tint the colour called for in that interior. A simple and well proportioned white Chi-Rho has been painted on it, and no expensive frontals will be needed. Each candlestick is simply a saddle made of three rectangular pieces of wood and painted a contrasting black. With wood, it was a simple matter to make candlesticks of exactly the right size.

In every one of these cases, and in many more, a local craftsman, guided by a professional artist or using his own creative imagination, has been able to make an offering in the House of God of his own skill at work upon the country's natural resources. In each case committees have avoided those dreadful catalogues of ecclesiastical bric-a-brac and chancel hardware. (Is there not enough third rate brassware in our churches to provide ammunition for another war?) Instead they have recognized that the country abounds in craftsmen (both professional and amateur) as well as in materials.

The good craftsman who understands thoroughly the function of the object he is to make will be able to make it

beautifully. Where an artist can be found to provide designs or suggestions, even an indifferent craftsman can do well. Why should any church or chapel in the land, for example, be without a simple stand on which to place the altar Prayer Book so that it may be easily read? Less than an hour's work in the family workshop will produce something adequate; and what joy might not a man have in taking far more time than that to glorify the works of nature in the service of God! Yet we are prone to go without even simple conveniences until we can fill our churches with the mass produced and often shoddy products of remote factories unconnected with the worship of those who offer it.

The country is full of people who can make things beautifully when they are given the occasion and the suggestion. (Did not Eric Gill say that an artist was simply a man who made things beautifully?) There is no need to let the secular exhibitors corner all the best work of the hooked rug makers. Weavers are multiplying everywhere, and they are sometimes to be found in the new community centres while the churches are still buying shoddy goods. Home workshops of the amateur abound, besides the shops of those who have devoted their lives to their crafts. A look into the parishioners' basements might not be a bad thing, to see where all the widely advertized lathes and drills are being set up. I know one amateur woodworker whose workshop is the source both of his own and of a working carpenter's finest handiwork.

Everywhere there are to be found skilled people longing to find something to do. Sometimes the longing is only half conscious; but whatever it is, it can be enlisted in the worship of God which all too often becomes reduced to the merely docile repetition of words. A little imaginative leadership is perhaps all that is needed. (It is the hundreds of small churches where this is mainly true. The richer churches have always, and rightly, been able to secure the services of the best artists). The creative artists whose help and suggestions are sometimes needed have never been lacking in self-sacrifice, though here we must remember that in their case their living depends upon their work. But the great truth is this, that the recognition of a need, the realization of a function, and the possession of a skill can make an artist out of many an unsuspecting parishioner, and can provide him with the occasion to make a significant dedication of his life and labour.

C. R. Feilding.

ANGLICANS AND REUNION

The reunion of Christendom is in a peculiar way a problem for all Anglicans, depending for its intensity upon the extent to which we recognize in other communions the marks of the working of the Spirit of God. Some of us are more conscious of these marks in the Roman or Orthodox Churches, others perceive them primarily in the Protestant Churches. It is with this latter aspect of the problem that this paper is concerned, because the writer believes that our relations with the Protestant Churches are of greater urgency than our relations with Orthodoxy, and of greater promise than our relations with Rome. The current controversy aroused by the promulgation of the dogma of the Assumption would appear to confirm the latter conclusion.

There is a definite area of agreement, among the vast majority of Anglicans, regarding the unity of the Church. Very few would question the conclusion of the Lambeth Conference of 1920 that the Christian fellowship should be manifested in 'an outward, visible, and united society , holding one faith, having its own recognized officers, using God-given means of grace'. On the other hand very few would agree with Hatch's Bampton Lectures of 1880 which argued that 'the forces which welded (the Christian societies) together and gave them shape are adequately explained by existing forces of human society...and the confederation of those societies which we commonly speak of in a single phrase as 'the visible Church of Christ' (was) formed without any special interposition of that mysterious and extraordinary action of the divine volition which, for want of a better term, we speak of as 'supernatural' (p.18). We believe that the form of order and ministry in which the unity of the Church for fifteen centuries found its centre was part of the divine purpose for its life. And yet, finally, few of us are able to avoid the conviction that non-episcopal ministries, 'have been manifestly blessed and owned by the Holy Spirit as effective means of grace' (Lambeth 1920). We believe that visible unity is according to the will of God, that it must find its expression through an episcopal ministry - and yet that God works really and spiritually outside that ministry.

We all share the dilemma of this position. But it is common knowledge that within this unity there exist two main

divergent emphases. Many share the position of the 'Letter to All Christian People' of the Lambeth Conference of 1920, which recognized 'all those who believe in our Lord Jesus Christ and have been baptized into the name of the Holy Trinity as sharing with us membership in the universal Church of Christ which is his Body'. To this group reunion with a Protestant body on the basis of Scripture, Creeds, Sacraments, and Episcopal Ministry would be the reunion of the now divided Church. Others - for example the authors of 'The Apostolic Ministry' (1948) - while acknowledging non-episcopal ministries as 'spiritually edifying or efficacious' (p.37), would in the final analysis identify the Church with those communions possessing episcopal succession (pp.30-31). To this group reunion with any Protestant body would be the restoration of that body to the unity of the Church. The width of cleavage is perhaps best illustrated by the attitudes adopted towards the Church of South India. While some are able here and now to accept the Church of South India as a living part of the one holy, catholic, and apostolic Church of Christ, (Lambeth Conf. 1948, Report of Committee on The Unity of the Church p.47), Dom Gregory Dix has recently described the South India Scheme as 'an act of disobedience to the known will of God for his Church' (Convocation of Canterbury, May 1950).

It is obvious that differences of this character have ultimate theological grounds, and we no longer share the optimism of Bishop Lightfoot that 'in this clamour of antagonistic opinions history is obviously the sole upright impartial referee'. Yet there is a marked tendency in recent discussion for scholars to abandon the traditional Anglican conviction that the history of the early Church provides us with vital clues to the significance of its institutions. It is suggested that the acceptance or rejection of episcopacy is a matter purely of religious orthodoxy and faith. But while sympathising with the growing recognition that the appeal to history is not decisive, I believe that this particular question can only be answered on historical grounds. The question is whether in the primitive Church episcopal succession was part of the content of the creed,or whether it was the means whereby the apostolic faith was preserved and safeguarded.

The first of these positions was excellently expressed in a letter written by my friend Dr. Eugene Fairweather to the 'Church Times' this summer. Taking up a statement of the Bishop of Chichester, who referred in a report to 'Churches which are orthodox in creed, but have a non-

episcopal ministry', Dr. Fairweather commented 'As a matter of simple fact it is hard to see how a Church which has a 'non-episcopal ministry' can be described as 'orthodox in creed' when one of its constitutive principles is the denial of a basic aspect of the apostolicity of the 'one, holy, Catholic and apostolic Church' proclaimed in the oecumenical Creed'. Even if such a body recites the Nicene Creed' it is committed to denying at the altar what it professes to believe'. The argument is that any group in Schism cannot claim to hold the Catholic faith because their very division demonstrates their rejection of the unity of the Church. It is an argument as old as St. Cyprian who wrote 'When they (the schismatics) say 'Dost thou believe the remission of sins and life eternal through the holy Church, they lie in their interrogatory, since they have not the Church' (Epistle lxxv (lxix)7). But it seems to me far less convincing from the pen of an Anglican than from that of St. Cyprian. For he was able to point to 'one holy catholic apostolic Church' visibly united in communion, to which he professed adhesion: and this one visible communion no longer exists in the form of his day. If orthodoxy requires of us the confession of one Church as that Church existed in the formative years of credal dogma - no Anglican is orthodox. The only people who can without qualification profess one Church to-day are Roman Catholics, Orthodox, and those who believe the unity of the Church to be purely spiritual and invisible. The rest of us, if we believe the Roman or Protestant communions to be part of the divided Body of Christ, all have to use this phrase in a sense different from that implied in its original historical background. As a matter of fact we all echo William Temple's admission: 'I believe in the Holy Catholic Church and sincerely regret that it does not at present exist' (Life p.387). And if we claim to be orthodox while speaking of the unity of the Church (which is explicitly affirmed in the Creed) in a sense other than the original, it is difficult to see how those who accept a 'novel' form of ministry and order (which is not explicitly affirmed) can be excluded from the unity of apostolic faith on this ground alone.

What evidence is there that the Church has drawn a distinction between episcopal succession as the safeguard of the faith, and the content of that faith? Irenaeus, the first thorough exponent of the relation of succession and doctrine, certainly seems to draw this distinction. When he summarises the 'rule of faith' (Adversus Haereses I.xl) he makes no reference to the ministry, but declares ' we

confront (the heretics) with that tradition which originates from the Apostles, and is preserved in the churches by means of the successionof elders' (III.2.2.et al). There is a passage (IV.33.8) which Gore translated 'The true gnosis is the doctrine of the Apostles, and the ancient system of the Church in all the world, and the character of the body of Christ according to the successions of the bishops' (The Church and the Ministry (1936 edn.) p.103). But this goes beyond any similar treatment in Irenaeus, is based on a text which is obscure and certainly does not require such a translation (see an important article by Professor Einar Molland in the Journal of Ecclesiastical History April 1950 p. 12-28). Tertullian in the 'de Praescriptione Haereticorum' suggests that even if the heretics could trace a historical succession to the Apostles they would be condemned as unorthodox by newer Churches which lack foundation by Apostolic men but 'since they agree in the same faith are accounted as not less apostolic because they are akin in doctrine' (xxxii). And it was precisely this situation that the European Reformers claimed to face. The original safeguard of the faith had failed, and had actually come to deny the apostolic doctrine. Because episcopacy was the instrument for the preservation of apostolicity and not part of it, it was possible <u>if absolutely necessary</u> to abandon episcopal succession in order to preserve the faith. This is the argument of the Augsburg Confession of 1530. Bishops are those to whom 'of necessity the churches ought by divine right to render obedience,' according to the saying of Christ 'He that heareth you heareth me' (Part II Article vii). But nevertheless 'when they teach or determine anything contrary to the Gospel, then have the Churches a commandment of God which forbiddeth obedience to them'. And the Confession claims the support of Augustine: 'Neither must we subscribe to Catholic Bishops if they chance to err, or determine anything contrary to the canonical divine scriptures' (ibid). Hooker takes the same position: 'The Church hath power by universal consent upon urgent cause to take (the authority of Bishops) away, if thereunto she be constrained through the proud, tyrannical, and unreformable dealings of her bishops, whose regiment she hath thus long delighted in'(Ecclesiastical Polity VII.v.8). The Church of England no less certainly than Luther repudiated the errors and heresies of Rome; but by the mercy of God our Reformation included the reformation of the apostolic ministry. We were spared that division between historic succession and apostolic truth which has been the bane of Protestantism. But it is clear that the Anglican Reformers, if forced to the decision, would have preferred

the repudiation of episcopacy to the repudiation of their theological insights. The preservation of episcopal succession was no accident, nor an insignificant privilege to be lightly despised - but those churches to whom it was denied might not be unchurched. 'This mistake proceedeth from not distinguishing between the true nature and essence of a church, which we do readily grant them (the Protestants), and the integrity of perfection of a church, which we cannot grant them without swerving from the judgement of the catholic church' (Archbishop Bramhall, Works III.518).

If we refuse to identify non-episcopacy with heresy simpliciter, our attitude towards those communions which accept the Scriptures, Creeds and Sacraments will be one of readiness to accept them as part of the Church of God constituted in the confession of one Lord, one faith, one baptism. But this does not mean that the trust of episcopacy which is ours can be lightly regarded in any movement towards reunion. 'Not by any merit of its own, but by the inscrutable providence and grace of God, the Church of England believes itself to have been privileged to maintain a ministry united to that of the apostles by unbroken continuity of ordination. Its desire is to share this privilege with all congregations of faithful men in which the pure Word of God is preached and the Sacraments are duly administered' (Hodgson, Doctine of the Church in the Church of England pp. 29-30). Yet if we are to share our integration of faith and order with other Christians we must be ready to learn and receive from them, and we must be ready to accept the possible sacrifice of things we hold dear. In the words of a book which I would recommend to every Anglican student 'neither the lax view which sees nothing really precious in its own tradition, nor the rigid view that sees some thing or some things so priceless that nothing can justify the risk of losing them, can claim to worship the Holy Spirit. He can only be served by those who value beyond measure the precious treasures of their own tradition, and yet are willing to run the risk of throwing these into the common pool in the confidence that the Holy Spirit will not contradict Himself' (J.E. Fison, The Blessing of the Holy Spirit p.25).

R. F. H. Hettlinger.

AN EXPERIMENT IN CHRISTIAN EVANGELISM

A third storey flat in Montreal is the headquarters for a group of young men and women living a creative role in Christian Evangelism. The members of this group are all graduates of Canadian Universities and members of the Student Christian Movement; all are either full or part time employees in factories. They are trying to put into practice a common conviction that the Church must make new departures in the field of Evangelism if the Good News is to reach labouring classes in our society. To many people in Montreal and in the S.C.M. throughout Canada the group is now an established institution and is known as the "Coop".

The Coop came into being in September 1949. Its formation was not something that just happened, but was, rather, the result of a shared experience of S.C.M.'ers across Canada. Last year the S.C.M. and Christian Work Camp Fellowship sponsored a Student-in-industry camp beld at Chalmers United Church in Verdun. At that camp about 30 students from Canada and the U.S.A. gathered to work in factories during the day, and to discuss the relationships of the social, economic and political problems of labour and the Faith at night. The camp was a practical attempt to understand the indifference of labour to the Church. It is a commonplace now that the Church (and particularly the non-Roman churches) have lost the allegiance of the working man. Something more than preaching or theorising is necessary if the Gospel is to be carried to men and women who have lost all contact with the Church. The Student-in-Industry Work Camps of the S.C.M. and the C.W.C.F. have been experiments in making that extra effort.

In a work camp a student Christian acts as a labourer and attempts to identify himself with labouring men and women for a period of three months. From the comparatively remote atmosphere of the University, students go to the down-to-earth realism of factory life--eight hours a day in an assembly line--one more cog in the vast industrial machine. In that time speed-ups, lay-offs, trade unions, and labour management relations become a reality. Work camps are training grounds for young Christians who wish to speak the Word of God to factory people. Here they have the opportunity to understand the life and problems of the worker from the inside, and hence are much better equipped

to interpret the word with meaning. Through past experience, however, members of the camps have gradually realized that in a three months period one just begins to understand the lot of the worker. Evangelism in a new field simply cannot be learned in so short a time. Because of this, at the end of the Montreal Camp of 1949, a group of Anglican, Presbyterian and United Church graduates decided to remain in industry, that in time they might be the better enabled to speak with authority and sympathy to the workers. The writers of this article formed a cooperative living arrangement of a more permanent nature than a work camp and it was soon christened the COOP.

Like many other work campers we started off last summer with all kinds of ideas about where a Christian's responsibilities in industry lie--all the way from showing the girls how properly to apply make-up, to high-minded notions of helping them to live better lives and bringing them back to a living and vital Church. Now, after a year, we are more convinced than ever that we must stay in the labour movement and that our primary job, for some time at least, must be in the labour and trade unions.

Apart from Roman Catholic labourers, there are very few who have maintained any contact with or interest in religion. The truths of our religion just don't make sense to them. We believe this is due to the fact that Christianity has become divorced from the everyday problems about which Our Lord spoke so strongly. Instead of feeding the poor, clothing the naked, healing the sick, the Church delivers its message about the Love of God, the Brotherhood of man in theoretical theological language. To the worker in a factory this kind of Gospel does not have any vitally relevant meaning. It appears to them that God cares for only the privileged few. The majority of people in the world must work long and hard hours to acquire at best only adequate means of livelihood. They are constantly faced with the great insecurity of factory life. They are interested in having some time of leisure after work in which to enjoy themselves. These are things that we have always taken for granted. We believe that we must work with them for better wages and shorter hours; we must fight speed-up and lay-off; and in small ways we must participate in their recreational and social life. In the past it has been the unions which have made the most progress along these lines. Thus we now see that our first responsibility as Christians in industry is to be active trade unionists. And thus it may come about after a long time that they will

become interested in this Christianity that we talk about, and start to trickle back into the Churches. Slow as it is, this appears to us to be the only method of Evangelism which in the long run, will prove effective. Because we feel that our religion has something to say to these people in their every-day lives, we have set ourselves the task of discovering how to live as Christians under their conditions. It is not an easy task, and requires, as might be imagined, a good deal of self and corporate discipline. A description of some of our main activities will serve to illustrate the steps which we feel are necessary in the job which we have outlined. This can best be done under three heads: life as workers, students, and as members of a cooperative family.

In the factory we work under the same conditions as all the other workers. We suffer from speed-ups, and lay-offs. At night we arrive home tired. Friday is the most wonderful day in the week, for it brings freedom from toil for another two days. Some of us receive wages so low that we must share our living expenses. As workers, we possess the right to participate in Trade Union activities, and we make the best of this advantage to work for the constructive interests of labour. Through this experience we have come to realize how inadequate is our knowledge of the historical background of Trade Unionism, and therefore in leisure hours, on alternate Saturdays, we study the history of Trade Unionism and the political and economic role of Labour. The second study program is held on the remaining Saturdays. This is devoted to the basic tenets of the Christian Faith. It is perhaps important to mention that one of the rules of the Coop is that every member must play some role of leadership in the Church -- whether it be work in a Sunday School class, Bible Class or Young People's group. On the home front, we cooperate in the various chores of keeping house. Our chief meal is at night. At this interesting session, usually shared by one or two guests of any description, the day's activities are discussed. Directly following dinner we hold family worship. This is a set form, which includes regular, systematic intercessions for those for whom we wish to pray. Following this, there are meetings, household 'fags' and bed.

But life at the Coop is not always a grind. It definitely has its rewards. In the field of labour we are beginning to know our way around. Fast friendships are being formed through common efforts and then, once in a while one of our factory friends will ask, 'why are you

doing this?' Then comes the reward--we are able to speak of the Christian Faith and of our general purpose. And then too, the clergy and some of the laiety have asked the same question and many of them have given us encouragement and support. Our keenest hope is, however, to see the day when many young Christians will get together and rent third story flats in industrial areas in order that the Faith might reach the worker in his job.

Helen Hall

Bruce Mutch